

855.9. 13
4

CURSORY OBSERVATIONS

ON A

LATE PUBLICATION,

INTITLED,

A N E S S A Y

ON THE

SIMPLICITY OF TRUTH,

SIGNED CATHOLICUS.

By J. PHIPPS.

L O N D O N:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY JAMES PHILLIPS,

GEORGE-YARD, LOMBARD-STREET,

M,DCC,LXXIX.

CURIOUS OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

ALPHABET

OF THE

SYMBOLS OF THINGS

AND

THE

FOUND

AND

THE

THE

Curfory Observations, &c.

THE principal design of Catholicus seems to be to arraign the discipline of the people called Quakers, as being of a popish and persecuting nature, in two respects. 1. In extending itself to things not in themselves criminal, nor directly immoral. 2. In applying its highest censures equally to offences against its rules and orders, as to the greatest enormities.

The doctrine and order deliberately and conscientiously received and settled by the united concurrence of the body, it hath all along held it to be its indispensable duty to maintain, not by external severities, but by the gospel methods of instruction, advice, and admonition : and in cases of disorderly walking, which have a tendency to infringe upon the peace and unity of the church, it hath always been principled against proceeding further, than to a sus-

pension of close communion with the parties offending, or in the ultimate, as occasion might call for it, to declare, that they, being departed from the unity of the body, are no longer of it.

Thus far the society hath found it requisite to proceed, and no further; for it hath constantly denied all authority in Christian churches, either to force an hypocritical conformity, or to inflict such pains and penalties as tend to the privation of life, liberty, or property. Hence it is evident, that the discipline of the Quakers stands not upon the same foundation with that which is supported by violence; but differs from it in nature, as well as in measure.

Respecting the application of their discipline to injurious and scandalous immoralities, the society considers itself not in the light of a civil magistracy, to whom the punishment of crimes and immoralities belongs, but as a religious body, to which such offences are no further cognizable, than as they are contrary to its principles, and breaches of its religious order. Immoralities, therefore, stand upon the same footing, in regard to the discipline of the society, with the breaches of its rules, and can be no otherwise noticed by it.

With

With regard to the occasional extension of its ultimate degree of discipline to offences merely against its principles and rules, I apprehend, that when any religiously united body hath, in its collective capacity, according to the best of its understanding, as received from the holy spirit and the holy scriptures, fixed the terms of its communion, it has a right, in all points it deems material, to see that they are preserved inviolate by its members, and to acknowledge, or reject any, according to their faithfulness, or unfaithfulness thereunto; and where it judges any have justly forfeited their membership, it hath a right to declare it: otherwise, litigious and refractory members might render the church a stage of perpetual contention, a huddle of confusion, or, as a kingdom divided against itself, which cannot stand. For its own preservation therefore, it can do no less than to *withdraw itself from every brother that walketh disorderly*^a; which it can do by no other means, but by declaring its disunion with them.

This is the ultimate process of the people called Quakers; which is not intended by them for the *punishment* of any, but for keeping the church as clear from disorder as may be.

^a 2 Thess. iii. 3.

This author allows^b, that every *civil society* hath an undoubted right to exclude every member that breaks the rules and orders formed by it; but denies it to a *Christian Society*, because every member has a right to *examine and judge*, whether the society, of which he is a member, is in fact governed by the laws and rules laid down in the sacred records.

This is a reason why he ought not to be *compelled* to abide in fellowship with one that he believes not to be so governed; but it cannot intitle him, either to insist upon the society's rescinding any of its rules, against its own conscience, or retaining him in membership with it, whilst he either professionally, or practically, lives in the disbelief of its principles, or the infringement of its established order. The *liberty* of individuals to *examine*, implies not a *power* in them to *control* the body, any more in a *religious* than a *civil* one.

Rules are necessary to the support of order in religious, as well as civil societies. There must be some power in the collective body, which is not in every particular singly, to answer the end of order. This cannot be less than a power to accept, or reject, particular members, according to

the suitableness, or unsuitableness of their conduct with its doctrines and rules. The nature of society, and the fitness of things, require thus much; and the discipline of the Quakers extends no further: it intrudes not upon the civil rights of its members, affects no secular authority, either over their persons or property, but leaves them in a reasonable freedom, either to continue in membership, by a conduct agreeable to its principles and rules, or to separate from it if they think fit.

The nature of society requires unity and harmony. A continued infraction of the terms of its communion, is not only a continual interruption to the peace of it, but has a tendency to its dissolution. Hence it behoves every regular, united body to support the observance of its rules among its members, for its own peace and preservation: sensible of this, the apostle, in his epistle to the Romans, writes thus: “ I beseech you, brethren, mark them who cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, *and avoid them.*” This a church cannot do, but by clearing itself from them; which is not *persecution*, but a necessary exertion of gospel discipline towards those, who, by their turbulence, might give disturbance to

to it, or, *by good words and fair speeches, deceive the hearts of the simple*^c.

I concur with Catholicus, that "*A Christian Society must be governed by Christian principles; and no laws or rules made now are of any force, if not agreeable to those made and recorded by the Holy Ghost.*" But, as he fixes so particularly on the article of tithes, let me ask him, by the way, upon what *Christian principle* is the demand of tithes founded? Where doth the New-Testament shew, that the *Holy Ghost*, which *abolished them* by its abrogation of that law which gave them, hath since authorised any to *revive, and compel the payment of them*?

Catholicus introduceth his charges against the people called Quakers, with a short relation of persecutions in other religious societies^d; then asserts concerning those he calls the governing part of this people, that "they are *not* pursuing those things that make for peace, and whereby one may edify another; but, *without attending to consequences, are giving into narrow and intolerant principles and practices.*" What are these? Why, first, *forming and proposing questions to our several meetings, unknown to the society, for about the first seventy years of its existence.*

^c Rom. 16, 17, 18. ^d Page 21.

The queries he mentions relate not to any new doctrines, but to some of those principles originally believed in and received by the society, and to a conduct consistent therewith; concerning which it was deemed requisite to use such a mode of inquiry, and of which the representative body, in their yearly-meetings, must be presumed to be most proper to judge. The author must permit me to observe, that the wider any go from the true principles of the society, the more *narrow and intolerant* those principles appear in their view; but had the author lived a century ago, I believe he would have experienced a stricter discipline than he is aware of; though the occasions for it now are become more numerous.

The late John Griffith is severely treated*, with those of the society who published his treatise; wherein he saith†, “ It likewise appears that every member, *entered as such by his or her voluntary consent*, is strictly bound to keep and maintain the established rules of that body; *the breach of which not only renders him or her guilty in God’s sight, but also accountable to the body*. It also behoves this body, immediately upon the transgression of its

* Pag. 22.

† Pag. 77.

“ rules and orders, to exert itself in dealing with transgressors, *and to administer sound judgment*, in order to restore them, or on failure of success *in that*, to disown, or refuse to have unity with such.”

Having given a mutilated citation of this passage, the words in Italics being omitted, Catholicus impeaches it, as teaching *subjection without examination and conviction, blind and absolute obedience to church authority and infallibility, ecclesiastical slavery, and maxims directly popish.*

To prove the truth of these charges, he brings the 13th and 14th articles of Pope Pius's creed, which he represents as *parallel* with it; pretending it is the same thing in the Quakers to require a conduct in their members answerable to the principles and rules of the body, and for the body to exercise its rules towards such members as prove disorderly, as it is in the Romish church penally to force its members to embrace *all the traditions and observations of it*, and to take *no other sense*, but that of holy mother church, for *the true sense* of the Holy Scriptures. He also confidently asserts, The heads of *both will enforce obedience—both receive their several rules and orders without examining the truth and propriety of them—both go upon a presumption that unlimited obedience is due to*
church

church authority; and both are as opposite to the doctrine of our Lord and his apostles, as truth is to falsehood, and severity to mercy.^f —Had he said these assertions are so, he had spoken more truly.

If it be *the same thing* to inform, advise, and admonish offenders, and in the ultimate to declare, that they, being gone from the principles of the society, or having deliberately and designedly acted in the breach of its rules, can be no longer esteemed in membership with it, till they come to repentance, and shew an amendment; if this be *the same thing*, as it is to carry on a discipline by the unchristian and inhuman severity of imprisonments, confiscations, banishments, whips, racks, and flames; and if it cannot be exercised but in *the same intolerant spirit*, then the people called Quakers might be ranked with popish and other persecutors; but if it is otherwise, Catholicus cannot be clear of great indiscretion, injustice, and calumny.

Upon a little recollection, though he affects to discover no difference in the *spirit* of those two disciplines, he acknowledges a very material one in their *issues*; in that, the ultimate of the Quakers is only to put offenders out of the church; but that of the Papists puts them out of the world.

^f Page 25.

This is *cutting off* indeed ; whereas that of the Quakers, properly considered, *cuts no man off*, even from the church. For, if any member of the natural body be *cut off*, it is impossible ever to unite it again to the body, so as sensibly to communicate with it, and be restored to its proper use in the body. The case of one disowned by the Quakers ought rather to be considered as a member which may be restored ; of which, through divine mercy, we have many instances.

Catholicus esteems it enormous and unaccountable^s, that the Quakers should fix as severe a penalty on their members for the *payment of tithes*, &c. as for *adultery and drunkenness*.

I have already shewed, that the discriminate punishment of immoralities belongs to the civil powers, which are no further under the cognizance of the society, than as they are contrary to its principles, and breaches of its rules ; and with respect to *tithes*, &c. it was the business of Catholicus, *first*, to prove, that they are in reality matters of such *little and insignificant moment*, as can no more affect the conscience of the body than they appear to do his own. Without demonstrating this, he

builds upon an insufficient foundation, and labours in vain.

The society proceeds no further in any case, than it believes itself necessarily obliged to do as a Christian body; and it is warranted also by the laws of the land, in shewing its disunity with such of its members as break its rules and orders. This I have understood hath been publicly declared by one of the judges in the Court of King's Bench to be the common privilege of all societies of tolerated Dissenters.

As offences against the rules and tenets of a society, though not in themselves deemed immoral, when overlooked or indulged, are liable to make way for, and lead into things more pernicious, it is incumbent on the society to deal with the *disorderly*, as well as *immoral*, members, for the prevention of evil consequences both to themselves and the body; and if such refuse the advice of the church, they justly incur the sentence of our Saviour, who directs it as a duty in particulars to *hear the church*, and that he who *shall neglect to hear it*, be accounted as *an heathen man, or a publican*^h: that is, as one not in membership with it. This must be done by an exclusive act of the church; for we

^h Matt. 18. 17.

esteem this to be preceptive and obligatory to the body, as well as to its particular members.

In this direction of our Lord, here is something besides acts of immorality to be censured; i. e. the *neglect of a member to bear the church*. Can this intend no more than to afford it *a bare bearing*, without any further observance? To what purpose would the former be without the latter? There is certainly *a medium* between *due observance*, and *absolute slavery*; and I should think *this medium* can hardly admit either of an *open opposition* to the rules of the church, or an *endeavour to expose it to public censure and derision*.

The apostle Paul, sensible of the necessity of unity and harmony in the church, was zealously concerned that the brethren might not walk disorderly, but in all things consistently with the truth, and in unity one with another. “ I beseech you, “ brethren,” saith he, “ by the name of “ our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak “ the same thing, and that there be no “ divisions among you; but that ye be “ perfectly joined together in the same “ mind, and in the same judgmentⁱ.”

ⁱ 1 Cor. 1. 10.

Besides

Besides God's exterior dispensation of his written law, he still condescends, according to his ancient promise, to teach *his people immediately* by his spirit in their hearts. This is the true basis of *the right of private judgment* : and as this is a privilege sacred to every man, so it is to every religious society ; no one of which is intitled to impose upon others in matters of doctrine or order ; neither hath any member of a church a right to impose himself upon it contrary to its established rules.

The respectable *John Locke* saith, “ No
 “ man by nature is bound unto any par-
 “ ticular church or sect, but every one
 “ joins himself voluntarily to that society,
 “ in which he believes he has found that
 “ profession and worship which is truly
 “ acceptable to God.”—“ As no man is
 “ bound to any church against his par-
 “ ticular conscience, neither is any church
 “ bound to any man against that rule and
 “ order established therein, according to
 “ its collective conscience.”—“ I hold,
 “ that no church is bound, by the duty
 “ of toleration, to retain any such person
 “ in her bosom, as, after admonition,
 “ continues obstinately to offend against
 “ the laws of the society. For these being
 “ the condition of communion, and the
 “ bond of the society, if the breach of
 “ them

“ them were permitted without any animadversion, the society would immediately be thereby dissolved.” Letter on Toleration, 4th edition, pages 10 and 13.

Liberty of conscience is every *man's* right, and no less the right of every *society*; and as no man ought to be forcibly imposed upon in that respect, neither should any society suffer itself to be imposed upon against its judgment by any man, whatever his pretence may be. Nor is that man who attempts it, doing as he would be done by, in such attempt, nor shewing that regard to the conscience of the body which he challenges to his own. The liberty of individuals Catholicus pleads for, would prove the slavery of society.

The religious liberty of a person consists not in a power to impose himself upon any religious society, against the rules of its communion; but in a freedom to join himself to one, whose rules, doctrine, and worship, are conformable to his conscience; or to disjoin himself from one, where all, or any of them, are not so.

Every one, who hath espoused opinions different from those of the people called Quakers, is at liberty to leave them, and
join

join himself to any other people. This cannot with propriety be stiled hard or unjust measure. Freedom of inquiry is allowed, and liberty of action is allowed, so far as can be consistent with the nature of society; which cannot be properly supported, if its members are suffered to live in the breach of its rules and orders without animadversion.

The intention of our discipline is not a dominion over the faith, or an abridgment of the just liberty, of any; it is not to *persecute*, for that is *to pursue with malignity, and to punish for religion*; which the society is firmly principled against. It seeks not the hurt of any, but the good of all, and that purity of manners, love, peace, and harmony, may, as much as possible, be preserved throughout the whole body, on the basis of truth.

It is allowed, that “every one *must judge for himself*;” but not that every one *must judge for the church too*. For, what strange confusion would this introduce! One member would demand this to be the rule, another the contrary; how should both be satisfied, and the church subsist in unity and harmony? Is the liberty of individuals to destroy the liberty of churches? Is every church to be subjected to an anarchy of jarring consciences, or to

be determined by the united suffrage of its own? How shall it steer safely amidst such multifarious and clashing currents, without danger of making shipwreck of faith, and of a good conscience?

Some things which the society esteems of moment, Catholicus deems of *little* or *no concern*, and blames it for exercising its discipline at all about them; and when any, professing themselves in membership with it, shew a dissent, and appear in opposition to its rules, he would have us to understand, *it is the society* that differs from them, *not they* from the society, and that all the contention and discord that ensues is to be charged to its account: for they, *peaceable creatures*, seek nothing but the *full, just, and absolute liberty* of framing rules for the body, so as may best suit with their own fancies, opinions, and practices. By the same *easy* principles, such a perfect conformity with the whole world may be cultivated, as shall produce that kind of universal love and harmony, which would render the church, like *Babylon*, “the hold of every foul spirit, and
“a cage of every unclean and hateful
“bird^k.”

^k Rev. 18. 2.

The *little things* such men require the society to allow them in, without reprehension, appear *not so little* in the estimation of the body. As to the apostle's *becoming all things to all men*, we think it hardly extended so far. The work of a great change from form to substance being then upon the wheel, he saw fit, for a season, to become to them who were without the law, as without law; and to the Jews, as a Jew; conforming himself to some of the rituals of the law, and even circumcising Timothy on their account. But when he found divers of the Galatian converts, instead of advancing in the faith of the gospel, had begun to relax, and shewed a disposition to reassume and retain the forms of the law, he plainly told them, "If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing¹." This intimates, that what he had before, in condescension, practised as a matter *indifferent* and *allowable*, he now saw was to be *testified against*, and the practice of it no longer accounted as *little* and *immaterial*.

What Catholicus hath advanced in his 5th section concerning the judaizing Christian teachers, who were *not in general men of vicious or scandalous lives*, yet whom he

¹ Gal. 5. 2.

allows, *the apostle would have cut off from communion*, seems directly applicable to those among us, who contribute to the continuance of the antichristian yoke of tithes, and by their conduct at least, plead for an hireling ministry, and other practices inconsistent with our religious principles, and manifestly tending to lead back again into the spirit and corrupt customs of the world; this being admitted, it must of course follow, that Catholicus hath therein fully refuted himself, and at once demolished that specious fabrick, which he hath been *so long* labouring to build and embellish.

Whatever notions any may reason themselves into, the spirit of truth alone can give a right understanding of what truth requires; and for this end a *manifestation of the spirit is given to every man to profit with*. The life in Christ is the light of men now as well as formerly. “I am the light of the world^m,” said he, “he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of lifeⁿ.” This hath not forsaken mankind, though too many, for want of believing in it, decline to follow it, or avoid it to shun the cross; and therefore remain

^m John 1. 4.ⁿ 8. 12.

short of the true sense and clear discernment of it.

Whilst Catholicus is so earnest and intent in setting up and extolling the human faculties, and *the reason of men in their unconverted state*, saying, *we find our Lord and his apostles appealing to it to judge of the most important truths, as whether Jesus was the Christ or not*°, &c. he seems to have quite forgotten what our Lord himself says in that solemn address to the Father, viz. “ I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him”^p. And upon asking his disciples, “ *Whom say ye that I am?*” Simon Peter answered and said, *Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God.* And Jesus answered and said unto him, *Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee; but my Father which is in heaven*”^q. Also what the

° P. 52. ^p Matt. 11. 25, 26, 27. ^q 16, 15, 16, 17.

apostle Paul wrote in his first epistle to the Corinthians', viz. "For what man knoweth the things of man, save the spirit of man, which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God." And again, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." These, and many other texts, which might be cited to the same purpose, our author seems to have overlooked; otherwise one would charitably suppose, he could not have so grossly perverted the obvious meaning of those detached passages, quoted from John Griffith, in page 51; by commenting on which, in the strain and language of modern free-thinkers (many of whom, whilst pretending to advocate the cause of religion, are secretly, and designedly endeavouring to undermine it, and like them too, hiding himself under a borrowed name;) he too plainly discovers himself to be a stranger to the subject he attempts to write upon, to wit, *the simplicity of truth*, and consequently, to the nature of that discipline which he hath been at so much pains to misrepresent.

It is no wonder therefore, he should suspect it would be called *a dark piece, and that he had been employed in an evil work*; for what good could he propose, or expect from it, seeing he entertained but small hopes of reforming those, whose reformation he professes to intend by it? And as persons who speak and act about religious matters in their own will and wisdom, often know not what spirit they are of; so Catholicus, page 44, evidently shews he is not so free as he would be thought, from that intolerant spirit he so much inveighs against, but allows in himself the very thing for which he condemns others.

A person had need of more leisure than I have, to follow such an author minutely through all his windings, declamations, and revilings. As that is not my intention, I shall pass on to page 63, where he saith, "Tithe-payers consider, imperfection must enter into, and make a part of those human ordinances to which they are enjoined to be peaceably subject for the Lord's sake; and therefore, though they *entirely disapprove* the principle of a hireling ministry, many of them think it most consistent with the peaceable spirit of Christianity, to let their disapprobation appear, in withdrawing from the hireling, rather than
" by

“ by contending with him, against the “ law of the land,” &c. This teaches, that *an entire disapprobation* of a demand, is *most consistently* shewn by an *actual compliance with the payment* of it; and also, that peaceably to *submit to the penal provision made by the law*, in lieu of voluntary payment, is to *contend against the law*.

The quaint reasoning of Catholicus, page 65, seems to import, that though we are under *no moral obligation* to pay tithes to the church-ministry, *for the exercise of their function*; yet we are under *a legal one* to pay tithes to them, as *spiritual servants* to the *civil state in that function*: and though their function is only to minister to *one* of the various religious societies in this nation, yet all the rest of those societies are to support this *partial* ministry as a *general benefit* to the whole. We are also to understand, that tithes being once mixed with the rents and purchase-money, are not to be separated from them; yet at the same time, they are to be held as *a distinct species of property*. This is a kind of property which appears to be erected on this sinister basis, that whatever the ingenuity of those churchmen invents, and procures power to impose, for their own emolument, immediately becomes *right* and *equitable in their hands*; and likewise, that

a refusal *actually* to give them what they demand, and yet peaceably suffering them *to take it* at their pleasure, is to *withhold it*, and thereby to do them injustice. Such are the notions which tithe-payers inculcate; yet, I confess, the complexion of this author's treatise seems rather to denote him a *tithe-receiver*, than a *tithe-payer*.

Page 67, Catholicus cites me, saying, "It is not the landlord that the *burden* falls upon, but the occupier," &c. This, whilst he seems to oppose, he virtually acknowledges, where he says, "Landlords, who have tithe-free estates, or who let them tithe-free, are generally well acquainted with their superior value, in that state, and fix their rents accordingly." This shews they generally take care to shift the burden from their own shoulders.

Page 68, Catholicus is pleased to suppose that my notion, taken from A. Pearson (Animadversions, p. 34) is brought to prove, *there is no positive claim or incumbrance upon that land*. But I brought it to shew, that the tithe centers not wholly upon the landlord, but reaches to the property of the occupying tenant, if he may be allowed any property in his own skill, care, labour, and expence in the tillage; for the tithe ariseth from *the produce*, and

in proportion to the produce : and in the case of *losing crops*, which have not unfrequently happened in divers parts, the tithing of such would be adding loss to loss upon the occupier, which tithe-payers themselves will hardly plead equity for. His comparison in a note, page 68, about turning a dwelling-house into a barn, is little to the purpose; because it is possible to cultivate the land in such a manner, as to bring little to the tithe-claimer, and yet not lessen the value of the produce to the occupier.

But we do not understand that any *burden* imposed upon land, *by remaining till it lessen the value of the land*, becomes therefore the *equitable* and *perpetual* property of a casual succession of receivers.

The late *Lord Hervey*, in his answer to the Country Parson's Plea, p. 65, saith, " This doctrine, of gaining an *estate in*
" *perpetuity*, through any imposition upon
" land, which, by length of time, makes
" the *value of it less*, in subsequent alie-
" nations, and by pretended equity, *the*
" *interest in it less* to all new purchasers, is
" of dangerous consequence to the whole
" landed interest of this kingdom". It
" establishes

* That there is *no positive claim upon the land*, is certainly true. For where there is a *rent-charge* upon it, the claimant, upon non-payment, *may enter upon, and possess the land on*
which

“ establishes a right *somewhere* in a perpe-
 “ tual land-tax, because, within forty or
 “ fifty years since, where the land hath
 “ borne this charge, the value of land hath
 “ diminished in proportion; and two-thirds
 “ of the lands in England, having within
 “ that time, by purchase or exchange,
 “ passed into the hands of new owners,
 “ (as may probably be the case of all our
 “ lands, before this tax can be released)
 “ therefore the *land-owner*, who bought his
 “ land, subject to the usual land-tax,
 “ shall, *in equity and conscience*, be for ever
 “ liable to pay two, three, or four shil-
 “ lings in the pound, by reason of his hav-
 “ ing bought the land cheaper.

“ By rules of property, and rights of
 “ state, such as this parson would esta-
 “ blish—The impositions of arbitrary power

which it is charged; but the tithe-claimant can take no possession of the land; he can only seize upon the *stock*, or *produce of the occupier*; which shews it is *not the land*, but the *stock* that is tithed. Tithes, therefore, are not a tenth of the land, but of the increase; and as the industry and expence of the occupant are included in the produce, as the instrumental cause of it, a perpetual grant of tithe, is a perpetual gift of *other mens* stock, charge, and labour, before they existed, wherein the grantors *had no property*. If they were justly seized of the land, they might have granted any portion of the land, and if they possessed any stock upon it, they might have demised as much of the stock in their possession as they pleased; but they could have *no equitable right* to give away the fruit of the labour, care, judgment, and charge of all succeeding occupiers.

“ become *matter of right*, in persons who
 “ can work the ancient land-owners out
 “ of their inheritances; and that if *ship-*
 “ *money* had been exacted for a length of
 “ time, till the value of all our lands had
 “ sunk under the exaction, new purcha-
 “ sers would have had no right to have
 “ been eased of the burden, because they
 “ would have bought the land charged
 “ with it, and cheaper by reason of it”. I
 “ totally deny him, or any person living,
 “ to possess any estate in the land, by rea-
 “ son of its having been lowered in value,
 “ through an unjust imposition. I conceive
 “ his *claim of tithe* to have no other foun-
 “ dation, in law or conscience, than *Peter-*
 “ *pence* had, before it was abolished by
 “ act of parliament. I conceive them both
 “ to have been *usurpations of the same na-*
 “ *ture*, which grew and obtained, in the
 “ times of darkness and devotion, through
 “ the craft of a *mercenary clergy*, and the
 “ superstition of a blind, deluded laity.”

Page 72, Catholicus cites me, saying,
 “ No ancestor of mine had a right to give
 “ away from me the fruits of my labour
 “ and expence, which never could be his,
 “ for purposes I cannot, in conscience
 “ and equity, comply with. My misled

“ Page 67.

“ predecessor

“predecessor never could be intitled to dispose of my conscience and property for me, before I existed, in support of the prevailing errors of his age.” “These,” he says, “are *bold* assertions; but tithe-payers, who frequently love to *examine* into the agreement between words and things, are ready to doubt their fitness.”

Well, how doth this author examine it? Why, first, by taking it for granted, that the *land*, and its *culture*, are synonymous terms, and then arguing from the land, instead of the tillage. The ingenuity of this is not to be disputed, but its propriety and pertinence remain to be questioned. He asserts, that, “If such ancestor had property, he had a right to dispose of it as he pleased;” true; but where he had *none*, what right had he to dispose of other mens property? He could have *no right* to leave at his decease, but *in the land*, and what might be *then* upon it; if that was clearly at his own disposal, he might alienate any part, or the whole of it at his pleasure; but the land being once descended, the future produce was *the property of those who raised it*, which he had no right, *in equity*, to pre-dispose of for them *in perpetuo*.

I esteem

I esteem so much of the *produce* of the land which I inherit, as my skill, care, labour, and expence intitle me to, never to have been in his possession, nor *equitably* at his disposal; and therefore look upon his act in alienating this from me, as a pre-invasion of, and a trespass upon, my right. "It is true, saith A. Pearson", when they, "our ancestors, were owners of land, they "might themselves yield and set forth "what part of their increase they pleased, "or might have given a tenth, or any "other part of their land, as they would, "or they might have charged what rent "they liked; but they could not charge "their posterity with that which was *na* "way theirs, nor which in any true sense, "construction, or understanding, they could "be said to have any property in."

Lord Harvey asserts*, that "the improvement of land is at least *equal to* "the value of the land; and a *tenth part* "of the produce, free from all charges of "raising it, is *not* a tithe, but a *fifth part* "of every man's property." If so, a very considerable part of the produce upon land, is owing to the charge and application of the occupier. *This* I cannot understand ever to have been the property of my ancestor.

* Great Case, page 45.

* Page 57.

His telling me, that *such ancestor pretended no scruple of conscience against maintaining a priest*; perhaps in so doing, he might think he did his duty, is not sufficient to satisfy me, that it is my duty too. Perhaps he thought it *meritorious and expiatory* of the highest crimes, according to the deceptive doctrine of a lucrative priesthood: is that a reason that I should *put into their mouths*^r, who believe no such merit belongs to them?

It is not upon *light and insufficient* grounds, that the society objects to the maintenance of ministers, by the compulsive means of penal laws, either by tithes, or any other mode of exaction. It cannot esteem such forced impositions to be at all congenial with the nature of a free gospel-ministry; but as a provision suited to the support of those who, Catholicus observes, “*sit down in a luxurious indolence*”, neglecting the flock of “*Christ, and serving their own belly.*” Such cannot be the messengers of Christ, who receive not their mission from him; nor can they be true ministers of the gospel dispensation, which is not a ministration of the letter without the spirit, but *essentially* of the spirit, and of the letter by

^r Micah. 3. 5.

^z Page 63.

the spirit, freely received, and as freely communicated. "Freely ye have received, freely give", is the command of our Lord to his ministers; and his apostle John dehorted the believers from contributing to the support of those who abode not in his doctrine; saying, "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, *hath not God*: he that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, *he hath both the Father and the Son*". If there come any unto you, and bring not *this doctrine*, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed. For he that biddeth him God speed, *is partaker of his evil deeds*." If, therefore, we assist in upholding those who under a profession of being moved by the Holy Ghost, to take the office of a minister upon them, yet too frequently deny it in doctrine, and decry it in conversation and conduct, and without any immediate sense of its influence, can minister from human arts and abilities at their pleasure: if, I say, we assist in the support of such, we partake with them in their deeds, and may consequently expect to share in their condemnation.

^a Mat. 10. 8.

^b 2 John 9, 10, 11.

We are therefore bound in principle, to refuse an active compliance with the demand of tithes, Easter-offerings, mortuaries, &c. together with those taxations in cities and great towns, made for the maintenance of the parochial Clergy, upon the householders, whether of the *same Church* with them *or not*; which is certainly a stretch beyond the right line of equity. For, if it is *right* that every church should bear its own expences, it must be *wrong* for any one, by acts of power, to exact upon other distinct churches, either for the whole or any part of its own proper charges.

The people called Quakers, verily believing it a duty incumbent upon them to bear testimony, both in profession and practice, against these things, it cannot be a point *immaterial and indifferent* to them, whether their members consistently support their testimony, or inconsistently act in opposition thereunto. Hence their discipline hath fixed a censure upon defaulters; and if in a few instances it hath been extended to a denial, it is well known they have been but very few, compared with the number of offences; nor even to these few until after much labour and long forbearance, and where the concurrence of other causes hath generally made it necessary:

E

which

which shews the society, so far from being of a persecuting spirit, is not disposed to be severe and rigid in this matter ; for it considers the compliance of many to arise more from weakness than wilfulness.

Page 73, &c. The author quotes a passage from my Brief Remarks, page 13, which he first mistakes, and then draws what absurdities he pleases from it. My intention, in the words "the Quaker takes the land simply as he finds it," &c. was, that he takes the land as he finds it, whether tithe-free, or titheable; and if it be titheable, he makes no agreement with his landlord *actually to set out and pay the tithe*, because it is against his conscience so to do; nevertheless if the tithe demander take it off his premises, as the law impowers, he makes no resistance.

When Catholicus, page 76, improperly charges *the conscientious Quaker with acting in open defiance of the law*, by taking away his whole crop after the tithe hath been marked out without his consent, he seems to forget that the tithe cannot *be legally marked out*, but by the occupier of the land himself; for so the law expressly directs; and therefore, his charge and reflections thereon proving nothing, fall to the ground. Besides, his plea for *actively* complying with the law of the land, in all cases, if allowed
to

to be just, will of course condemn the martyrs and confessors of every age and clime.

Page 75. He misunderstands my meaning in adducing the case of Shadrach, &c. and then pretends, *Tithe-payers seem utterly at a loss to make the application.* Having cited this assertion from our opposers, "Your conscience is not to *supersede* the "the laws of the land," I immediately subjoined; "Are the laws of the land *superseded*, when yielded to either actively or "passively? Doth every person who suffers "a restraint, or a punishment, *supersede* "the law that inflicts it? Were the decrees "of Nebuchadnezzar or Darius *superseded* "by the submission of the faithful Shadrach, Meshech, Abednego, and Daniel?"

Can any person of common sense be utterly at a loss to understand that I meant, *submitting* to the penalty of a law, is not to *supersede* the law; for the law stands in the *same force* after the penalty is suffered as it did before, and those who have once suffered may repeatedly suffer by virtue of the same law. I apprehend, to *supersede* a law, is to *render it void*; which is only to be done by an equal or superior power to that which made it.

Ibid. "They find that tithes were originally instituted by divine authority." But we also find they were since abolished

by the same authority. Circumcision was likewise originally instituted by divine authority, and if there had been as much to be got by *that* as by tithes, it might have stood an equal chance for a revival; especially as it hath this additional plea, that Paul actually circumcised Timothy.

Ibid. Catholicus considers tithes in the Christian church, if not on the same full authority, yet as standing on the *common consent* of the people. I suppose he means their *partial consent* in Parliament; but as they are an imposition more disagreeable, more oppressive, more productive of litigation and quarrel, and more destructive to the harmony that ought to subsist between ministers and hearers, than any other in the kingdom; those therefore who advocate its cause, are not in reality pleading for equity, love, and peace, on the bottom of truth; but the contrary.

Page 77, Catholicus expatiates upon the seeming inconsistency of the society, in bearing testimony against war as well as against tithes, yet allowing its members in the payment of taxes professedly for the purposes of the first, whilst it disallows their payment of the latter.

But I would wish him to consider, that our testimony is not only against the exaction of tithes, but also against the state
and

and circumstances of that ministry which is supported by them, as a body assuming to themselves the stile of God's ambassadors; whilst they appear to us, not to be immediately commissioned and sent by him, but are of human induction, though it is the unalienable prerogative of the Lord of the harvest to send labourers thereinto.

But we have no objection to the rule of the civil government providentially placed over us, as we are a part of the civil body of this nation, and our testimony against war respects our own conduct rather than theirs: for though we are made sensible in our consciences, that it is unlawful for us to take any part in military affairs, either personally, or by substituting others in our stead, and therefore cannot actively pay those taxes and assessments made for that purpose; yet in the present state of nations, and till the peaceable spirit of the Gospel obtain a more general prevalence, which we trust will in time become the case, we do not take upon us to judge sovereign rulers for seeking to defend the community by arms, whilst they apprehended themselves at liberty in their consciences so to do. And as they always have been, and still are, *justly* intitled to claim the contributions of their subjects, for the support of legal authority, and the general service; we are
not

not willing to be wanting in the discharge of that duty, seeing we are not concerned in the application of the taxes : and though some are said to be for the carrying on of war, we know of none but those for the militia, that are solely appropriated to that purpose ; all other taxes, going into the publick treasury, whence all the publick expences of the civil government are defrayed. And seeing also, that we have not found that *most sure*, and *immediate* law of the gospel-covenant*, *written by the spirit of God in the heart*, to lay the same absolute restraint upon us, against the payment of taxes, customs, and duties to the civil powers, as we are sensible of against the payment of tithes, and other ecclesiastical demands ; but, on the contrary, we are expressly commanded by our Lord and Lawgiver, to render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's ; we therefore not only acquiesce in the payment of those imposts, but are singularly careful therein, not to defraud the government ; to which, under divine providence, we hold ourselves obliged for the protection we receive, respecting our lives, liberties, and properties ; for which, and divers peculiar indulgencies to our conscientious scruples, we esteem it justly intitled to our honourable

* Jer. xxxi. 33, 34.

Heb. viii. 10, 11.

regard, peaceable submission, and grateful acknowledgments.

To conclude, if the advocates for tithes, and for other practices inconsistent with our principles, can prove, or will say, that that they are therein led and guided by the spirit of truth, and that they are careful to live and act under its immediate influence, and that no suffering, reproach, or inconvenience, is brought on the society by their conduct; and if Catholicus in particular can prove, or will assert, that a necessity was laid upon him by the Holy Ghost to write and publish his Essay; if I say, they can prove or truly assert all this, I shall be ready to admit that they are not the proper objects of the Church's censure. But if they cannot, nor stand clear in their consciences of having acted, in these respects, from secret motives of human policy, and worldly wisdom, to avoid the cross, and shun suffering, it behoves them to consider how liable they are in such a situation to delusion and error. And I sincerely wish that no longer leaning to their own understandings, but humbly applying to the Father of lights, for further illumination, they may, 'ere it be too late, be brought *in reality* to the *knowledge*, the *obedience*, and the *simplicity* of *truth*.

F I N I S.

B O O K S

LATELY PRINTED BY

JAMES PHILLIPS,

GEORGE-YARD, LOMBARD-STREET.

A Nimadversions on the Practice of Tithing under the Gospel; including Remarks on the common Arguments now used in Support of divers Ecclesiastical Impositions in this Nation; especially as they relate to Dissenters, by Joseph Phipps. Price 6d.

The Anarchy of the Ranters, and other Libertines; the Hierarchy of the Romanists, and other pretended Churches, equally refused and refuted, in a twofold Apology for the Church and People of God, called in Derision Quakers, by Robert Barclay. 1s. 6d.

The great Case of Tithes, &c. by Anthony Pearson: with an Appendix, in which are contained some brief Extracts from Milton and other Authors on the same Subject. 1s. 6d.